

The conoclast.

"It is no moment for a late arrival to a party," he remarked, within his tone a hint of the gloom accompanying a sentimental misunderstanding. "You were to have come on the 11.02. It is now—"

"Don't!" she exclaimed, prettily, but pettishly. "I hate to be tried at a bar where justice is overshadowed by the first witness—a machine-made in Waltham. Waltham is not a nice suburb at all, and it is terrible to consider how much more trust a man puts in his watch than in a woman's word."

He was silent while considering what might have been said at the same time it appeared as if she was right. He did make of his watch a court of appeal—a dernier resort—as she made a few years, shed becomingly.

"The 11.02, however, proved quite impossible," she continued, calmly. "I had to go to the office, and I could come to the home of an aunt without making of it a ruin."

"I don't see why—I was here at the quarter past—"

She regarded him for a moment with the wild-eyed stare of injured innocence. "The 11.02 was said to be impossible," she repeated. "I was having an early luncheon with a man who came to the house on business connected with the mill and remained on pleasure connected with pats de foie gras. And when I listened at the door of the dining-room they were talking of James G. Blaine."

"Ethel," exclaimed the young man, with a visible frown of annoyance, "you can make a fool of me—as by compelling me to wait for the 11.02, until now—but don't add my discomfort by making game of me. James G. Blaine is—"

"James G. Blaine is papa's best friend. I wouldn't dare to go near him when he talks on the subject. And papa had the nickname."

And as she delivered this convincing statement with a superior smile, and sent it home accompanied by a slight nod from her blue eyes, he meditated more that might be said. Feeling urged him to draw the comparison between the saving of seven and three-fourths cents and the disappointment of a waiting lover, but finance is a delicate subject where a man and maid are concerned, so he held his peace, and began to plan for holding her hand. Somewhat absent-mindedly he remarked: "Well, there was the 12.02."

"The 12.02, yes, but don't seem to realize that this Thursday is the 12.02. Thursday, the day of the appointment to which I have been looking forward since Sunday." Certainly it is Thursday and I was under the impression that the 12.02 ran every day except Sunday.

"Of course, stupid! But I can never take the 12.02 on Thursdays. It is the most impossible train. Bridget takes it to come in town for her afternoon out."

He gazed blankly and quite unconvinced at his six-a-year until she added, "You don't seem to understand—or you won't—but there are things one positively cannot do. One may see for the girl, you see, or read to her while she reads, or do her work for her, or even eat with her if she comes from a very nice intelligence office, and says she must be one of the family when she comes, but there is only one when you are bringing her out for the first time. She is the 12.02, and even more impossible than the 11.02."

Her hands were clasped tightly round the parasol handle, and she had quite ignored his tentative movements toward innocent familiarity. He reflected that men with black-hair schemes most frequently stand in their own light, boldly possessed himself of her gray glove and its contents, and said with increased cheer, "Well, the 1.45."

"To his surprise she blushed rosy red, so that he felt as profoundly amazed as if he had been in Switzerland. He had gone out of an early morning to find a favorite meerschaum mislaid the previous evening, and had discovered a hauntingly beautiful surprise.

"I suppose I must tell you all about it," she murmured. "You see, there was such a lot of time between the 12.02 and the 1.45 that I remembered what you told me once of a man who utilized spare moments of the sort—Eliza something was his name—and in the end grew most wonderfully learned. Of course, acquiring Hebrew, or even Sanscrit, was nonsense when I had only from 12.02 to 1.45, but I took the first step and went into the library."

"That was several steps," he re-

marked mentally, trying not to compare himself to those who feet at scars and still have wounds.

"How amusing. Did I say that? It's a joke, isn't it? And you once told me women had no sense of humor. Besides, it was several steps, because I was quite across the hall and in the drawing-room when the idea first came to me."

"Well," he went on in an encouraging manner, "so, while I was sitting here reading for the millionth time these three weeks old advertisements on that dead wall, and eating my heart out for I had no luncheon—and between whiles making myself a laughing stock to the men who have regard for station by imploring them for information as to a possible accident down the line, you were trying to make a learned woman of yourself?"

"If you would only listen," she pouted. "I got that darling pencil you gave me Christmas and then I sharpened it with that sweet punkie you sent me New Year's, and then I remembered that I had never given you a penny in exchange for it, and that some time it would be sure to cut—friendship. Of course, you don't believe in such superstitions, but you know, and I know, it's not true, but somehow the fates don't seem to know. And not a person in the house had a penny—mamma, nor Cousin Jen, nor the second girl—"

"He satiated on suburban etiquette the allowed one a borrow money from servants with whom one might not share a railroad train, while she continued, "And we shook Cousin Jen's baby's hand, but nothing came out except nickels, and Cousin Jen teased me about it over waiting the penny for you, so that I ran back into the library and shut the door hard. You see you are not the only one who suffers, in spite of your railroad station official. And somehow I took your pencil out of my desk and it reminded me of you, and you seemed to be smiling, and I thought of that last moonlight evening in the canoe, and the silver-plated book of the water, and the dreadfully affectionate couple under the willow, playing the banjo, whom you said you envied, and it was all so beautiful, and the scent of the lilacs in the air, and while I thought of them—and you—the 1.45 went by—"

He gave with his own hand the convulsive clasp that he would have given to her hand, and he remained where he wished it. Then reason re-asserted with the usual grim visage.

"The lilacs were not in bloom," he said, stily. "They are only budding now, and that evening was three weeks since."

"Which is about the length of time that will elapse before I keep another appointment with you," she said, with such dignity as could accord with quivering lips and trembling chin. Fancy struggled with fact, and the latter was the victor.

"Never mind the lilacs," he whispered. "There is yet the 2.10 and the 3.15, to say nothing of the 4.06."

"The 2.10," she replied, concisely, "went by while I was putting on this hat. Christmas and then I sharpened it with that sweet punkie you sent me New Year's, and then I remembered that I had never given you a penny in exchange for it, and that some time it would be sure to cut—friendship. Of course, you don't believe in such superstitions, but you know, and I know, it's not true, but somehow the fates don't seem to know. And not a person in the house had a penny—mamma, nor Cousin Jen, nor the second girl—"

He was slightly staggered, but managed to murmur, "Still, dear, I do not intend to give up my minutes to put on your hat when we are going to the theater."

"No, not if I have nearly to put it on. But, you see, this is my changeable hat. These roses and loops in the side come out, and the flowers are of having a word at yesterday with my blue tailor-made, and it had violet and mauve ribbon, which of course, would never do for a brown coat. While I was hunting for my red ribbons Cousin Jen offered to lend me some burnt orange or of her black lace—"

"The 2.15 went by," she said, convincing her, and before the 4.06 came mamma thought we ought to have tea. You see, I had missed my luncheon on account of having the appointment with you so early as the 11.02."

He seemed interested in the horizon, but she went on, "I began to think, then, how perfectly lovely it would be if you should take some train yourself and come over, instead of waiting for me. I mentioned that to Sue, my sister, and she thought it very likely that you would. So I ordered muffins because you like them, and we drove the tea just five minutes before the 4.11 from here came in. When it whistled I ran to the door and looked down the avenue toward the station, and women who had been in town shopping got off, and Bridget came back, but you—you didn't—and I was so disappointed. Then Sue said you hadn't half as much intuition as Harry, and intuition on a man's part made a girl happy—and—my eyes got red, and I couldn't find a veil to cover them in time to get the 4.11."

"Miss Beesbe," said her companion, interrupting brusquely, and rising to his feet, "I see no object in continuing the present conversation. You came on the 4.48. I am deeply grateful for the trouble you have taken, and have no doubt the tea table and your fair companion amply compensated for leaving a matinee in my company. I can well believe, now, that it is impossible to please a woman, because she never knows what she wants. Will you allow me to see you to the 6.25?"

As they walked away he reflected bitterly on the large disasters that follow small mischances. After she was on the 6.53, and the 6.53 was on its way to a suburb that was nicer than Waltham, he continued to reflect. Their last words had been mutually cutting.

She had said, gravely, "It has been a mistake. I could never be happy with a man who used the same letters in spelling mathematics and love. Good evening."

"With pleasure I write to let you know the great benefit I have received from your medicines and self-treatment at home," writes Mrs. A. Flackus, of Dairy, Klamath Co., Oregon.

"I was advised me to take your Golden Medical Discovery for my trouble, I followed your advice and received great benefit. I had no appetite at all, and could not sleep. So it went on for months, till one day I got at home. I got heart seemed to beat as fast as it could. I felt like fainting. My heart beat 120 or 125 times a minute. I went to the doctor; he gave me medicine, but it did no good. I thought I had to die. Every night when I went to bed I feared I would not be alive in the morning. I wrote to Dr. Pierce for advice. He prescribed his Golden Medical Discovery and Pleasant Pellets. At first I thought the medicines did no good, but I kept on taking them as advised, and when I had taken five bottles I was so well that it seemed I did not need any more, but still I took the sixth bottle. I was then perfectly well. The headaches, pains in stomach, heart trouble and all left me. I have had a good appetite ever since, and can sleep well and do all my work."

"If you are not sure what ails you write to Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y., stating your symptoms fully, and he will prescribe for you free of charge."

He had said words of obvious politeness and intentional sarcasm. Now, however, he recalled the look in her eyes, and it troubled him. Quite suddenly a new idea came to him, in juxtaposition with a telegraph office. Stepping in, he called for a blank and wrote:

Miss Ethel Beesbe.

Rose Villa, The Highlands.

James G. Blaine is dead. Next time take the 11.02.

William Van Rensselaer Whitney.

It was brought to the girl before 9 o'clock, and she smiled once more as she read.

"Dear boy," she murmured, "I will remember that. With such a knock-down argument for papa he can never keep the mileage. And after all, Willie is right. If I had only not the 11.02 I don't think we would have quarreled at all." When she had considered this idea for a time, with the air of a feminine Isaac Newton making an important discovery, she added, "After all, I believe I was wrong. He has intuition."—Edith Minter, in Boston Home Journal.

A GREAT SNAKE REGION.

One of the Curiosities of the Klamath Falls Country.

From the San Francisco Chronicle.

The hideous sights that haunt men's minds in delirium and other disorders of the brain are believed to have no foundation in fact. The sufferer sees huge masses of snakes crawling and writhing in heaps before his mental vision. He imagines them hissing and quivering about him, but in his normal condition he realizes that all these visions are hallucinations and nothing more. He knows perfectly that he has never seen more than two or three snakes together in actual life. And yet, untrue as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact that snakes do exist in great numbers in certain localities that have infested one locality until it has become a wonder to all those who chance to visit it.

WISCONSIN'S LUMBER OUTPUT.

Climate Conditions Affected by the Denudation of the Forests.

From the Philadelphia Times.

According to a report written by Filbert Roth, a special agent of the United States department of agriculture, the state of Wisconsin, with a population of about 2,000,000 and taxable property to the amount of \$600,000,000, has a home consumption of over 600,000,000 feet of lumber annually, besides enormous quantities of other wood would cost the state over \$2,000,000,000 of its northern half, a land surface of over 18,000,000 acres, only 7 per cent. is cultivated, the rest forming one continuous body of forest and waste land. From this area there have been cut during the last five years more than 75,000,000,000 feet of pine lumber alone, and the annual output for the past ten years has exceeded 3,000,000,000 feet every year.

The industries exploiting this resource represented in 1890 one-sixth of the total taxable property in the state, paid to over 2,000,000 on the sum of \$12,000,000 in wages and the value of their products was equal to more than one-third of the entire output of the agricultural industry. Of an original stand of about 12,000,000,000 feet of pine about 12,000,000,000 feet of hemlock and 18,000,000,000 feet of hard wood.

The annual growth, which at present amounts to about 900,000,000 feet, and of which is largely overbalanced by the natural decay of old and over-ripe timber.

At present nothing is being done either to protect or to restore the denuded lands, of which fully 50 per cent. are unproductive. This policy causes a continuous and ever-growing loss to the commonwealth, which at present amounts to about 50,000,000 feet every year of useful and much-needed material. A further result is that the denudation of these forests is making a marked change in the natural climate of the state, and is operating injuriously on the amount of rainfall the state should receive.

To remedy this condition Mr. Roth is of opinion that stringent legislation will have to be immediately adopted, and measures framed to reserve and protect the timber lands of the state, and that, in his opinion, it will be necessary for the state to repossess itself of these lands, either in whole or in great part.

county and extending to the mouth of Bull creek on White river. For gray wolves killed in last region the bounty is fixed at \$7, and 50 cents each for coyotes. In addition to these bounties the cattlemen board Jesse and Lon Brown and furnish them with the horses needed by them in their campaign against the wolves.

These men, who are brothers, own a total of sixty or seventy steel traps, with which they catch the wolves and coyotes. In a little over two weeks they recently caught 165 coyotes and twenty gray wolves. They place the traps in places where wolves and coyotes are accustomed to rendezvous and take such precautions as are necessary to prevent cattle, calves and horses being caught in their traps. They employ a mounted man as a milk driver. The wolves and coyotes to their traps. This scent is very powerful, the principal ingredient being musk or something very similar to it in odor. The four-footed pests of the range are decidedly cunning, and great care has to be taken not to arouse their suspicions. The traps, after being set, are placed in a hollowed out spot in the ground, covered with paper and then hidden from view by sprinkling light dirt or dust upon them.

A piece of fresh meat, usually mutton, is then laid close to the trap after a quantity of the scent has been placed upon it. This scent has a peculiarly penetrating odor, and if the wind is favorable, will attract wolves and coyotes from as much as a mile away. The animals sniff the air, proceed toward the spot from which the scent proceeds, and while smelling suspiciously around the scented piece of meat step into the trap and are caught. Each trap is securely fastened by a chain, so that it cannot be dragged away by the captives. Frequent visits to the traps are made by the hunters, when the captured animals are killed and their scalps and hides taken away as evidence necessary to secure the bounty.

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This land of snakes, known by either of the two suggestive names of "Linkville" or "Snake Valley," is situated in an obscure corner over the California border line in Oregon and may be reached in twenty-four hours' travel from San Francisco. You have only to take the northern-bound train for Astor, thence a stage line of about twenty miles conducts you to your destination.

It is impossible to associate "snakes" with the beautiful and varying scenery through which you pass as far as Klamath Hot Springs. Trees and shrubs and all the glories of mountain scenery greet you on every hand. You drive through a luxuriant growth of evergreens and shrubbery; you cross and recross numerous streams; you breathe the soft air of Shasta and Siskiyou. But when you have left Klamath Hot Springs a few miles behind there is an appreciable difference in the landscape. Sparsity of vegetation is the first observable change. At every turn of the road the aspect becomes more barren, more forlorn and more desolate. Finally, you seek in vain for a single shrub or tree. The dust-covered and weary, you pull up at a dry, withered village, that produces nothing on its hard, rocky soil but revolting snakes. You have reached Linkville, the haunting retreat of serpents!

There is a bridge in Linkville that spans Klamath river. From this bridge, which is a vantage point as far as view is concerned, a most extraordinary sight meets the eyes. Along the river banks at irregular intervals of a few yards are seen dark blot ranging from a foot to three feet in diameter. They are stationary and as passive as a bowlder, which they resemble in color. But if a stone is hurled at any of these strange spheres, to your horror, snakes will crawl off in every direction and the ball will melt away as hard as steel. In fact, they are pulsive creatures that have thus been coiled up in a perfect sphere glide away under rocks, and one minute later not a snake is to be seen in that particular spot. But the other balls of snakes in the vicinity are little disturbed by the same inspection, and will retreat only a moving line of white, until in the mass that before looked like an immovable bowlder. These that were scattered, however, may later seek the neighboring spheres or in a few minutes sink out of their hiding places and reassemble themselves in balls.

As has been said, Linkville is in a very barren district. Nothing whatever grows upon the rocky soil, not even sagebrush. And so, the river banks, which are a mass of drift wood and rocks, seem a fitting place for snakes. But it is singular that Linkville would not be habitable, while the immediate neighborhood of the river is the favorite haunt, they team, for many hundreds of yards away, and may be seen along the roadway and around the houses and creeping over the roofs. They possess a marked degree of tameness, and pick them up with impunity, and children play with them on the doorsteps.

The Linkville snakes are dark in color, with two yellowish stripes on their backs. The average size is about an inch and a half in diameter and a yard in length, though some are smaller and some attain much greater proportions.

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Of Value to the Reader.

Lancaster New Era.

The Scranton Tribune has issued its annual "Political Hand-Book" which makes a handsome book of over 200 pages. It has many excellent features, among which we may mention a daily resume of the occurrences in Scranton during the past year, a full account of all the more important political events, political tables relative to the state and entire country, local information, population, pensions and a hundred other things, all of which will be found of great value to the general reader. The Tribune deserves much credit for its enterprise.

The Best Yet Seen.

Lancaster Examiner.

With all due respect for our metropolitan contemporaries, we must in candor say that the almanac issued by the Scranton Tribune is the best we have seen. It is a political handbook and household encyclopedia, containing a mass of information, local and general, which will make it a constant companion of the editor's paste pot and ink stand.

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Praiseworthy Departure.

Carbondale Leader.

Several fine publications from the newspaper office of this region have been received by the Leader. One of the best of these is the Scranton Tribune's Political Hand-Book for 1897, a comprehensive and meritorious publication. It contains a complete and up-to-date account of the political, social and other statistics of the state and county, with a wealth of other information. The book contains over 200 pages, is indexed, and represents a vast amount of painstaking labor.

The Most Complete One.

From the Pittston Gazette.

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Uncertain Business.

"I tell you, getting married is shaky business."

"I notice the couple have to have some one stand up for them."

New York Announcement.

Horner's Furniture.

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Furniture Makers and Importers,
61-65 W. 23d St., New York
(Adjoining Eden Musée.)
Horner & Co.'s establishment is one of the sights of New York.—Newspaper Comment.

The Tribune Almanac and Year Book

The Scranton Tribune Almanac and Year Book for 1899 will be ready for delivery on Monday next and may be procured of Tribune carriers or at the news stands. Owing to the unprecedented demand for the Tribune Almanac last year, the edition was exhausted before all orders could be filled, and it was therefore impossible to send copies to esteemed contemporaries.

Below is given a few of the compliments bestowed by exchanges upon the publication of the previous year, which is equalled, if not excelled, by the Almanac for 1899:

- Exceptionally Fine.**
From the Philadelphia Ledger.
The Scranton Tribune, which deservedly holds an influential position among the newspapers of interior Pennsylvania, has issued an exceptionally fine almanac for the current year. As the Tribune takes an active part in political affairs, it is quite apropos that its almanac should be devoted largely to such matters. To the politician and, indeed, all who take an interest in public concerns, this "political handbook" as the publishers call it, will be especially valuable. But there are other things besides politics treated, and this will make it welcome in the households of all The Tribune's readers.
- One of the Best.**
From the Honesdale Citizen.
The Scranton Tribune almanac for 1897 is one of the very best issued by any office, city or county. It is filled to repletion with an immense amount of most valuable information on a great variety of subjects. You cannot afford to do without a copy.
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